



HIGHLIGHTS

Published by the Community College Survey of Student Engagement

UPDATE: ACHIEVING THE DREAM

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Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count is a multiyear national initiative designed to help more community college students succeed. There are 58 colleges in nine states currently engaged in a five-year effort with the support of a partnership including six foundations and eight national organizations. Conceived and launched by Lumina Foundation for Education in 2004, the initiative is informed by data on levels of student success in each of the participating colleges. With a particular emphasis on low-income students and students of color, colleges work to improve student attainment through lasting changes in their own practices and cultures.

Colleges are coached to foster lasting institutional transformation focused on a student success agenda. The Community College Leadership Program oversees an experienced cadre of 24 coaches who make four visits each academic year to work with college teams, along with the support of a data facilitator who works with a data team. Colleges evaluate their own student attainment data and launch strategic interventions to improve the outcomes. Formative evaluation of results is used to refine approaches and guide efforts to scale up the most promising practices.

A review of 248 coaching reports following college visits over a two-year period provides insight into the conditions necessary to create institutional transformation for student success. Among significant findings are the following:

• *Administrative leadership, institutional research, and strategic planning are critical.*

• *Creation of a culture of inquiry and evidence is necessary.*

CCSSE and Achieving the Dream

The Community College Leadership Program at The University of Texas at Austin is one of eight national partner organizations for Achieving the Dream. Of the 58 institutions—three of which are universities—involved in Achieving the Dream, 50 have participated in CCSSE and are using their CCSSE results, along with student cohort tracking and other data, to target areas where interventions may significantly improve outcomes for students. Participating states and colleges are:

Connecticut **

Capital Community College *
 Housatonic Community College *
 Norwalk Community College *

Florida **

Broward Community College *
 Hillsborough Community College *
 Tallahassee Community College *
 Valencia Community College *

New Mexico **

Central New Mexico Community College *
 Dona Aña Branch Community College *
 San Juan College *
 Santa Fe Community College *
 Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute *
 University of New Mexico -Gallup *

North Carolina

Durham Technical Community College *
 Guilford Technical Community College *
 Martin Community College *
 Wayne Community College *

Ohio

Cuyahoga Community College *
 Jefferson Community College *
 North Central State College *
 Sinclair Community College *
 Zane State College *

Pennsylvania

Community College of Allegheny County *
 Community College of Beaver County
 Community College of Philadelphia *

Pennsylvania (cont.)

Delaware County Community College
 Northampton Community College*
 Montgomery County Community College *
 Westmoreland County Community College *

Texas

Alamo Community College District *
 Alvin Community College *
 Brazosport College *
 Brookhaven College *
 Coastal Bend College *
 College of the Mainland *
 El Paso Community College District *
 Galveston College *
 Houston Community College System *
 Lee College *
 North Harris Montgomery Community College District *
 Prairie View A&M University
 San Jacinto College *
 South Texas College *
 Southwest Texas Junior College *
 Texas Southern University
 University of Houston-Downtown
 Wharton County Junior College *

Virginia **

Danville Community College *
 Mountain Empire Community College *
 Patrick Henry Community College *
 Paul D. Camp Community College *
 Tidewater Community College *

Washington

Big Bend Community College *
 Highline Community College
 Renton Technical College
 Seattle Community Colleges
 Tacoma Community College *
 Yakima Valley Community College*

* CCSSE Member Colleges

** CCSSE Statewide Consortia

- *Disaggregation of data is a foundation for critical conversations.*
- *Distributed leadership and teamwork are required.*
- *Data must be used to inform and mobilize – not to threaten or demoralize.*
- *Data are used to identify gaps in student performance and attainment and to inform planning and decision making.*
- *Identification of priorities for action must flow from the analysis of student outcomes.*
- *Involvement of internal and external stakeholders is fundamental.*
- *Research on promising strategies and best practices should inform decision making.*
- *Students should be placed at the heart of the vision and the work.*
- *A focus on success in developmental education must become the foundation.*
- *The emphasis must be on how to change the institution and not on how to “fix” students.*
- *Development of cultural competence throughout the college will undergird the work.*
- *Applying the understandings from formative evaluation to alter college processes and practices will be crucial.*
- *Alignment of strategies, priorities, plans, and resource allocation is necessary.*

The initial 27 colleges are now reaching the stage where they can evaluate their early interventions. Work in the year ahead will include reports on emerging promising practices.

Register now for the 2007 CCSSE Workshop, **Strengthening Student Engagement to Improve Student Success**, scheduled for Tuesday, May 22, 2007, at the Four Seasons Hotel Austin. The registration deadline is April 30, 2007. Please visit the 2007 CCSSE Workshop webpage at <http://www.ccsse.org/workshop/> for program information and online registration.

STRATEGIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

The following examples illustrate the types of strategies developed by three Achieving the Dream colleges based on their analysis and discussion of student cohort data, CCSSE results, and other pertinent information.

• **Southwest College, Houston Community College System (HCC) (TX)** – Developmental Studies launched a structured, integrated road map to facilitate student success through a study skills course. Three classes were randomly chosen to participate in Fall 2005, led by an instructor and a counselor. Students engaged in academic advising, tutoring, and career assessments. Degree plans were filed, and two career conferences were held on academic and workforce programs. Five classes were involved during spring 2006. Early evaluation indicates higher levels of success for students involved in this intervention. All other colleges in the HCC have implemented the course for fall 2006.

• **Valencia Community College (FL)** – Valencia implemented supplemental learning / instruction (SL) in developmental math courses during spring 2006. There were 34 SL sections (all campuses) involving over 900 students who had not been informed in advance that they were enrolling in an SL section. A total of 407 first-time enrollees took advantage of the supplemental experience. Those who participated had a 64% success rate (C or better) compared to 39% for those who did not take advantage of SL. They also had higher grades.

• **Broward Community College (FL)** – Students who were assessed as needing college prep classes (developmental education) in all three areas (reading, writing, math), with two at the most basic level, were designated as eligible for coaching (case management) in conjunction with a Student Life Skills Class in fall 2005. A total of 223 students received coaching outside of class. Results are showing higher rates of success and persistence for students with the highest interaction with coaches, compared to those with no coaching or lower levels of interaction. There were 13 coaches trained for this early intervention.

At least 24 additional Achieving the Dream colleges are now reaching the stage where they can evaluate their first interventions aimed at significantly improving student success.

For further information, please visit www.achievingthedream.org